

WMTA NEWSLETTER

August 2020

Highlights In This Issue:

Page 6	Membership Update
Page 7-10	District Auditions Information
Page 11-12	Badger Keyboard and Badger V/I
Page 13-14	Young Composer Competition Results
Page 15-19	IMTF Article

About Our Organization

Since 1910, Wisconsin Music Teachers Association has continued in its goal to develop, maintain, and recognize high standards of music instruction and performance in Wisconsin.

We accomplish this by supporting students and educators with events, resources and a powerful network of like-minded individuals.

By providing structure and activities at local, state, divisional, and national levels, we work together to accomplish goals which couldn't be achieved by working alone.

The first official meeting of the WMTA was held on June 22, 1910 in Appleton Wisconsin under the direction of the first president, Dean William Harper.

Our state now has 16 active local associations which provide regular meetings, student programs, teacher development, membership networking and so much more.

As an affiliate of Music Teachers National Association, we share common objectives and values with musicians and musical educators in all 50 states.

MTNA was founded in 1876 and is the oldest professional nonprofit music teachers association in the United States.

We actively endorse the MTNA mission "to advance the value of music study and music making to society and to support the professionalism of music teachers".

Our mission is to advance the value of music study and music making to society and to support the professionalism of music teachers.

Calendar of Events

- **September 1, 2020**
MTNA has extended the due date for all membership renewals to Sept 1.
- **September 16, 2020**
MTNA Performance Competition Entry Deadline
- **October 10, 2020**
MTNA Performance Video Upload Deadline
- **October 22, 2020**
Executive Board Meeting
- **October 24, 2020**
12:00pm, WMTA Annual Business Meeting



Wisconsin Music Teachers Association

Part of Music Teachers National Association

Letter From The President

Dear WMTA Members,

Hello my fellow WMTA members! I hope you are doing well in these interesting times. The WMTA Executive board and Administrative Council met on August 7 and discussed several items:

1) The 2020 Annual Meeting. This meeting is held every year at the Conference, usually on Saturday at noon. This year it will be on **Saturday, October 24, 2020 at 12 pm**. This will be a virtual meeting. Details will follow in future emails regarding the platform and how voting will occur.

2) 2021 District Auditions. The Executive Board will make a decision on how these are occurring at the October 22, 2020 board meeting. A separate committee is discussing the logistics of how to have the auditions virtually.

As the WMTA leadership moves forward know that the health and safety of all is a primary concern. I ask everyone to be patient as we work through all of these decisions.

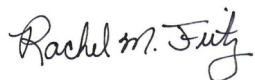
If you are feeling what I am feeling you are often overwhelmed with all the information that is being directed to you and just do not want to spend one more minute online. However I wanted to point you to a few resources that I have found helpful as I have been trying to work in these trying times:

[MTNA Covid-19 Resource Page](#): This site has multiple sources listed for information including how to reopen your studio and tips on how to teach video lessons. Lots of connections with other organizations as well as resources.

[Teaching In the Time of COVID-19](#): I do not like spending one more day or time online but I have found many of the webinars to be worth the extra screen time.

Thank you to each of you for your continued membership in WMTA.

Sincerely,



Rachel Fritz, WMTA President



WMTA Leadership

Executive Board

PRESIDENT: Rachel Fritz rachelfritz@yahoo.com

IMMEDIATE PAST-PRESIDENT: Nicholas Phillips, NCTM phillins@uwec.edu

1ST VP-CONFERENCE: Kayme Henkel, NCTM kaymehenkel@yahoo.com

2ND VP-MEMBERSHIP: Justin Krueger, NCTM justind.krueger@gmail.com

TREASURER: Sydney Alexander sydnealexander94@gmail.com

ARTS AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY: Teresa Drews tdrews@wcmusic.org

BADGER KEYBOARD: Mary Anne Olvera, NCTM maolvera@baldwin-telecom.net

BADGER VOCAL/INSTRUMENTAL: Opala Bilhorn opalas.music.studio@gmail.com

COLLEGE FACULTY REP: Jessica Johnson, NCTM jgjohnson@wisc.edu

DISTRICT AUDITIONS: Sandra Statz, NCTM sandra@statzmusic.com

INDEPENDENT MUSIC TEACHERS FORUM: Mickey Lytle, NCTM musicbymickey@gmail.com

LOCAL ASSOCIATION CHAIR: Mary Anne Olvera, NCTM maolvera@baldwin-telecom.net

Administrative Council

COLLABORATIVE PERFORMANCE FORUM: Kirstin Ihde ihdek@uwosh.edu

MEDIA CHAIR: Katie Nelson katharyn.nelson@gmail.com

MTNA CERTIFICATION: Amber White amberspiano@gmail.com

MTNA COMPETITIONS COORDINATOR: Gail Heywood NCTM gailheywood0@gmail.com

MTNA COMPOSER COMMISSIONING: Michael Mizrahi michael.d.mizrahi@lawrence.edu

MTNA FOUNDATION: William Whipple williampwhipple@gmail.com

MTNA STUDENT COMPOSITION COMPETITION: Kaju Lee, NCTM leekaj@uwplatt.edu

MTNA JR. /SR. COMPETITIONS: Bethany Hartlaub bjhartlaub@ghartlaub.com

MTNA YOUNG ARTIST/CHAMBER MUSIC: Ashley Jehn hankeash132@gmail.com

TEACHER AWARD OF EXCELLENCE: Drew Donica drewdonica@outlook.com

THEORY: Sydney Alexander sydnealexander94@gmail.com

WELLNESS FORUM CHAIR: Jessica Johnson, NCTM jgjohnson@wisc.edu

WMTA STUDENT COMPOSITIONS: Sam Ecoff sam@samecoff.com



Local Association Presidents

[CVMTA Chippewa Valley Music Teachers Association](#)

President: Esther Pedigo, esther.pedigo@gmail.com

[FVMTA Fox Valley Music Teachers Association](#)

President: Stacey Kraus, skraus2@gmail.com

[GMC WMTA Greater Milwaukee Chapter](#)

President: Chrissy Deal, chrissy.deal@gmail.com

[KRMTA Kenosha Racine Music Teachers Association](#)

President: Denise Masloski, dmasloski@gmail.com

Co-President: Judy Ballard, jballard10@wi.rr.com

[LAMTA La Crosse Area Music Teachers Association](#)

President: Reene Sampson, reene.ann.sampson@gmail.com

[MAME Madison Area Music Educators](#)

President: Denise Taylor, dtaylorpiano@gmail.com

[MAMTA Marshfield Area Music Teachers Association](#)

Contact: Janet Wolf, revjanet@tzn.net

[MMTA Michibago Music Teachers Association](#)

President: Louise Mann, louisemannpiano@gmail.com

[OAMTA Oshkosh Area Music Teachers Association](#)

President: Madison McCarney, madison.mccarney@gmail.com

[RRMTA Rock River Music Teachers Association](#)

President: Julie Hildebrandt, davidh53@frontier.com

[SAMTA Superior Area Music Teachers Association](#)

President: Roberta Grube, grube4@centurytel.net

[SCVMTA St. Croix Valley Music Teachers Association](#)

President: Mary Anne Olvera, NCTM, maryanneolvera@gmail.com

[SPAMTA Stevens Point Music Teachers Association](#)

President: Gail Heywood, NCTM, gailheywood0@gmail.com

[WAMTA Wausau Area Music Teachers Association](#)

President: Not Presently Filled



Welcome to New Members in 2020

Jeanette Baumgarn	Holmen, WI
Natalie Brunia	Madison, WI
Jill Heinke Moen	Eau Claire, WI
Christina Lawrence	Appleton, WI
Buffy Luostari	Maple, WI
Nicole Moritz	Slinger, WI
Zachary Preucil	Madison, WI
Lyle Raymond	Sun Prairie, WI
Mary Skop	Kenosha, WI
Wade Troyer	Madison, WI

*Denotes Collegiate Member

Website Membership Database

The Find-A-Teacher database is available to all WMTA members. This feature allows each of you to control information that is posted and seen by the public. You can also promote yourselves with new profile options such as choosing multiple areas of expertise, adding a description of your studio, your photos, contact information and links to outside sites. The office is frequently contacted about recommendations for music teachers in a specific area. In the future, we will be sending all requests to this page to help them find the information they need.

To create a WMTA online teaching profile, click on the link below, then follow the instructions on the screen. The processes should only take a few minutes. Once complete, you will be able to access and change all of the information at any time. For questions, feel free to contact the central office by emailing wisconsinmta@gmail.com.

[Find-A-Teacher Database](#)



Membership Update

I hope this finds each of you doing well and staying safe in these unprecedented times. I am truly amazed at the innovation and adaptation that I have seen and heard about in recent weeks. Six months ago, I bet none of us could imagine teaching virtually, attending a national conference online, cancelled auditions, online competitions, and Zoom recitals.

As we seem to be all more comfortable with technology usage over the past few months, it is time we need to think about how to connect with our other members if we have not already been doing so. Although programs and monthly meetings might take on an entirely different flavor as events are likely postponed, perhaps that opens the door for other ways of connecting.

Some ideas you might try out in the fall (or sooner):

A virtual coffee chat or happy hour - consider having a time to check in with your local association (maybe some additional members who are not as likely to leave home for regular meetings might be up for this). Consider sharing ideas of what has been working or not working with online teaching. Have a brainstorming session on what activities might be possible. See the glass as half full!

Perhaps it is a great time for a local association to consider a book study/discussion. It is the year of Beethoven's 250th birthday after all! Maybe something on the sonatas or his life might be of interest to your group.

Consider a virtual presentation for your local association or connect with another local association. Maybe it is a good time to shift some financial resources to bringing in a more well-known speaker for folks to skype/zoom with rather than a different speaker each meeting. I know personally, my screen time is already high, so in this case, "less is more."

Finally, keep safe and continue to reach out to one another. Although there are the inconveniences of this pandemic and the health risks, try and find the positive in those moments - perhaps more time to connect with family, additional time to practice - to work on a dream piece you've always wanted to tackle, time to read a book that has piqued your interest. I have had the opportunity to hear several piano teachers perform via Facebook that I never have had heard before, and it has been so wonderful to hear each person's unique interpretation of it.

I wish you all the best in these summer months, and best as you figure out the best ways to proceed forward in the fall!

Justin Krueger

District Auditions

District Auditions Dates and Contact information should be available and online by September 1. At this point, please keep in mind that LOCATIONS and DATES may CHANGE but the list of District Chairs is as current as possible at this time. Please feel free to contact your local District Chair with any questions you may have.

I presented at the 2019 WMTA Conference. You can see the Power Point by clicking here: [“Making Sense of District Auditions”](#).

There were 7 hand outs:

- [Making Sense out of Auditions – links to important info.](#)
- [Theory Levels & Performance Times allowed](#)
- [Sample letter that Your District Chairs give to you when you receive your audition times.](#)
- [Please print and give this to students \(your DC will fill in red sections\)](#)
- [My sample letter to MY students in Sept.](#)
- [Eligible Baroque and Classical Composers list](#)
- [WMTA District Auditions Scoring Rubric](#)
- [Copyright Representation and Indemnification Agreement](#)

The Music Theory Tests for District Auditions have been updated! Study guides and practice tests will be posted on the WMTA website by September 1st so you can begin preparing your students for the 2021 Auditions season.

Before I go any further with Audition information, I need to address the 2021 Auditions specifically as a result of being affected by CoVid. The 2020 season was upon us when the Pandemic hit. No one would have ever guessed in a million years that a virus could shut down a country so I am confident that our Wisconsin teachers do understand that with all the uncertainties that were happening in March, that the move WMTA took to keep our students safe, was the best solution at the time. I know you are now wondering: “how will my students be safe at the 2021 auditions?” First, I want to tell you that I’m a Mom. I would NEVER put kids at risk so we are working very hard in our leadership positions to do the right thing when it comes to the 2021 auditions. But, with CoVid, there is risk so we will do our best to minimize that. I am going to tell you that as I’m writing this in AUGUST, 2020, we do not know what the 2021 auditions will exactly look like. While I can tell you that the THEORY testing will be done via an ONLINE submission, I cannot tell you the exact PERFORMANCE platform at this time. I want to reassure you that I will be working closely with our WMTA President and your Local District Chairs. We also have a subcommittee and plans being formed so we have options as 2021 comes closer. If you have concerns, **feel free to contact ME**. Yes, you may contact your Local District Chairs but they are doing their BEST in a volunteer position (as am I – we are all volunteers). I do not want to burn out our local DC’s. We need them for years to come. In fact, if you want to be a help to your DC, ask how you can assist. Let them know you are available. I want to reassure you that the 2021 auditions will BE HELD! Please know they will not be canceled. However, with that said, at this point, our local leaders are working to try to secure venues for the events...many of which can NOT confirm places for our auditions at this time. We expect as time comes closer, we will be able to confirm locations if the pandemic lessens it’s threat.

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District Auditions

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Normally our DC's receive communication from me AND they attend 2 meetings a year together. Our June meeting has already been moved to August and will be virtual. The DC's are planning to meet much more regularly virtually to be sure that we present the best plan of safety for you and your students. We appreciate your patience as we work through this. My heart is full, patient and understanding. Together we stand as WI music teachers and TOGETHER we will get through this!

Now, back to audition info: I wish to address a couple of questions regarding choosing music for auditions. While Ovation (the WMTA computer program for entering students) will allow teachers to enter pieces that go over the time limit for their Grade/Track, please review and know that there are time limits for each grade/track. Therefore, if they go over that time limit, judges do have permission to cut the pieces. It is best to choose music that totals a total time that is 1-2 minutes less than the maximum time so that the student has time to warm up as well. Also, be sure to list, or choose, the correct titles for your piece(s) in Ovation. If you are performing only a Bach "Prelude", for example, be sure to choose that Bach "Prelude" and NOT the "Prelude and Fugue". If you choose the "Prelude and Fugue" then you must perform both pieces. If a piece is not listed, you can enter the correct piece but be sure that the piece you are looking for is not listed before creating a new entry.

Please remember the rule regarding Downloaded music. WMTA has decided to CHANGE the requirements for using downloaded music. While we still want to really encourage teachers/students to PURCHASE printed music for students to use in auditions, we also want to support LEGALLY downloaded music that follows the USA Copyright Laws. Therefore, we will be having two items in place: 1) Our rules will be stating that by entering the auditions/competitions the students agree that they are following the copyright laws and we will provide a link to a one page summary of the copyright laws AND 2) we will be providing a printable statement that the student/parents will fill out and sign stating that the music they are using does in fact follow the USA Copyright laws. This statement must be printed and present with the music when the music is given to the judge at the competition. There will be no exceptions to this because WMTA cannot be liable for a Copyright infringement by a teacher/student. Preapproval of downloaded music will no longer be required. If you have questions about any specific music please email: wmtacompositionhotline@gmail.com.

Another point of importance is that IMSLP states: "This site strives to comply with Canadian copyright laws." Therefore, as the student's teacher, please be sure to do your research and be sure the music is legal in the USA. IMSLP does list the "Copyright" of the pieces and does list if it is "public domain" so this shouldn't be a hard thing to figure out.

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District Auditions

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Aural Theory testing: As a reminder, ALL students will receive ONLY TWO hearings of the Aural Theory questions during the Audition Theory testing. This has always been the rule, therefore, we want to emphasize for our newer teachers that this may take some training on your part. FYI, intervals are played melodically going up, then down, then together...that's one hearing. If you do have questions about how the testing is done, contact your local District Chairs.

There have been some concerns about awards in the past. We have changed how awards will be ordered in the future so for the majority of awards, you should be able to contact your District Chair/Awards Chair immediately after both District and Badger auditions to receive your awards. For personalized awards (the 100 & 200 point plaques and the High School medals), please allow up to 4 weeks after these events.

If you are a judge and you need to update information about your judging, or you would like to become a judge for WMTA, please contact Abby Patchet at: abbypatchet@gmail.com.

Entering students out of district: This is available but you do need to contact the out of district Chair person early to seek permission to enter students in a district other than your own. If at all possible, please seek this permission by Thanksgiving as the out of district Chair does need time to be sure they have enough judges for their areas. Please DO NOT enter students out of your district until you have permission from the out of district Chair. After you enter your students in a different district, you will not be able to see your registrations but the Chair for that area will be able to keep you posted with schedules, etc. To get your results after those auditions, go to Ovation and then to "Records" and "Student History".

Respectfully submitted by
Sandra Statz, NCTM
WMTA State District Chair
info@statzmusic.com



DISTRICT	SITE	AUDITIONS DATE	ENTRY DEADLINE
Appleton	Lawrence University	3/20/2021	2/20/2021
Eau Claire	UW-Eau Claire	4/17/2021	3/19/2021
Kenosha	UW-Parkside		
La Crosse	Viterbo University		
Madison	UW-Mead Witter School of Music	3/14/2021	2/16/2021
Merrill	Our Savior's Lutheran	3/6/2021	2/6/2021
Oshkosh	UW-Oshkosh	3/13/2021	2/20/2021
River Falls	UW-River Falls	3/27/2021	2/17/2021
Sheboygan, West Bend	Lakeland University	3/6/2021	2/6/2021
Stevens Point	UW-Stevens Point	3/20/2021	2/19/2021
Superior	UW-Superior	3/7/21 (Sun)	2/8/2021
Waukesha, Milwaukee	UW-Milwaukee	3/20/2021	
Wausau	Wausau Conservatory	3/13/2021	2/22/2021
Whitewater	UW-Whitewater		

DISTRICT	CHAIRPERSON(S)	EMAIL	PHONE
STATE CHAIRPERSON	Sandra Statz	sandra@statzmusic.com	715-379-0418
Appleton	Catherine Walby	catherine.walby@lawrence.edu	920-832-7448
Eau Claire	Abby Patchet	abbypatchet@gmail.com	715-864-5298
Kenosha	Anna Kojovic-Frodl	skojovic@aol.com	262-880-8586
La Crosse	Lisa Freedlund Lori Lawson Carol Lombard	lisafreedlund@yahoo.com lajtlax@yahoo.com pianopanoramastudio@gmail.com	608-790-7377 (Lisa) 608-788-1874 (Lori) 608-526-9726 (Carol)
Madison	Emily Schultz	emilypianostudio@gmail.com	608-345-1134
Merrill	Katie Livingston Carolyn O'Brien	katzpianostudio@msn.com cobrienpiano@gmail.com	715-218-6894/715-536-4054 715-966-2592
Oshkosh	Dr. Kirstin Ihde Annemarie Birschbach	ihdek@uwosh.edu ajbach@att.net	319-830-3264 (Kirstin) 920-379-1968 (Annemarie)
River Falls	Deanna Roen Teresa Lindahl	kroen@centurytel.net btbjg@somtel.net	715-262-5904 715-247-4522
Sheboygan, West Bend	Louise Mann Beverly Mark	louisemannpiano@gmail.com bevbeemark@gmail.com	920-912-2106 (Louise) 920-242-7318 (Beverly)
Stevens Point	Mary Lou Hofer and Ann Marie Novak	mhofer@uwsp.edu anovak@uwsp.edu	715-340-2221 (MaryLou) 715-572-1935 (Ann Marie)
Superior	Roberta Grube	grube4@centurytel.net	715-364-2537/218-349-6419
Waukesha, Milwaukee		-	
Wausau	Mona Grote	monagrote@yahoo.com	715-432-1728
Whitewater	Bethany Hartlaub	bjoyful90@outlook.com	262-215-5495

Badger Keyboard 2021 Competition

As we approach planning for our upcoming events, the clearest and most salient information is that there is great uncertainty in the planning for Badger Keyboard Competitions 2021.

At present, we do not have any confirmations on dates at any universities, because of the many challenges and flux that the universities are facing as they approach the fall semester. Presently, many venues are postponing making final decisions regarding spring semester events based on how the fall semester worked out.

I do know this much at this time:

Badger Keyboard S - Dates have been requested and put on the university calendar for Sunday, May 16, at UW-Parkside, pending official confirmation

Badger Keyboard NE - Dates have been requested and put on the university calendar for Saturday, May 22, pending official confirmation

Badger Keyboard NW – Date was requested and was pending confirmation, but has just been denied, based on uncertainty of planning for Spring 2021.

Therefore, venue and date pending and tbd.

This is a changing field right now, so please note, while these dates are entered on academic calendars, they are currently not confirmed, and it may be a while before they can be approved.

The Badger Keyboard Competition will no doubt occur, but the format, shape, details and variables of the event are very much unclear at this time. We will be working to create the highest quality, most positive and meaningful experience for our students, while keeping at the forefront the safety of our teachers and our students in these uncertain times.

Patience will become a most highly prized characteristic for all.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anne Olvera

President, St. Croix Valley Music Teachers Association

Nationally Certified Teacher of Music

WMTA Local Association Chair

WMTA Badger Keyboard Chair



Badger Vocal/Instrumental

Usually this newsletter submission would include a report about the Badger Vocal/Instrumental State Event and the results. In lieu of that I'll share some musings.

Who could have possibly imagined at this time last year the kind of journey we would experience in 2020!? I'm glad not to have the super-power of knowing the future! Otherwise I think I would've said, "No thank you to 2020!" That being said I've been impressed with the commitment of my own and other teacher's students who have, as my fellow teachers have probably also experienced, adapted to different styles of learning and doing life. I've been impressed with the way students and fellow teachers have risen to the challenge of learning how to use all kinds of new technological tools. I feel that I can say with confidence that we've become stronger and more creative people because of this. And from now on, all my studio knows how to use zoom so I will never have to agonize over whether or not to call a snow day! Silver linings, right!!

Looking ahead to 2021- the Badger V/I competition will be held on Saturday, May 22 at UW-Stevens Point. The registration deadline is April 20th.

Respectfully Submitted,
Opala Bilhorn, NCTM
Badger Vocal/Instrumental Chair

MTNA Performance Competition

This year the competition will be virtual at the state level. Deadline for entry is 3:00 pm, Eastern Time, September 16, 2020. More information can be found at [THIS LINK](#).

Video upload deadline is October 10, 2020 to rachelfritz@yahoo.com. The platform for video submission is YouTube.

WMTA Young Composer Competition

I am pleased to announce the results of this year's WMTA Young Composers Competition! A total of thirty-five students from around the state entered WMTA's Young Composers Competition this year, up from twenty-two entries last year. We believe this to be a record number of entrants! This represents an increase in participation of more than 60% over last year. Seven teachers entered students this year compared with six last year. We had twelve entries in the Elementary division, fifteen entries in the Junior division, and eight entries in the senior division.

Perhaps more important than the quantity of entries is the quality of those entries. Our judge for the event, Joshua Backes, MM, Lecturer in Music Composition & Theory at UW Milwaukee, was very impressed by the diversity and incredible quality of this year's entries. We clearly have some very talented and hardworking student composers in our state!

Students submitted scores without their name or their teacher's name, so judging happened anonymously. Each composition was thereby judged based on its own merits. Each entrant received detailed written comments from our judge, pointing out things that were done well, and gentle suggestions for improvement. He also included a copy of each entrant's score, marked up with suggestions.

The awardees from this year's competition were as follows:

In the Elementary division

- Winner: *Stormy and Sunny* by James Currier, Teacher: Sam Ecoff
- Runner up: *Ice Fishing* by Talen Ternberg, Teacher: Jeff Miller
- Honorable mentions: *The Artic Fox* by Calla Stoik, Teacher: Jeff Miller and *Lost in the Forest* by Delana Marsh, Teacher: Jeff Miller

In the Junior division

- Winner: *Mischief in the Enchanted Forest* by Whitney Woolf, Teacher: Sam Ecoff
- Runner up: *Luna* by Angelina Vu, Teacher: Annemarie Birschbach
- Honorable mentions: *The Duchess' Ballroom* by Grace Schultz, Teacher: Tricia Marton, *The Jungle* by Helina Menzel, Teacher: Sam Ecoff, *Triumphant Fanfare* by Noah Garlock, Teacher: Sam Ecoff, *A Flowing Bird* by Allison Yang, Teacher: Sam Ecoff, *Frosty Winter Snow* by Jasmine Sun, Teacher: Sam Ecoff

Continues On Next Page

WMTA Young Composer Competition

Continued From Previous Page

In the Senior division

- Winner: *String Quartet in D* by Isabella Nichols, Teacher: Sam Ecoff
- Runner up: *Monster's Dance* by Brooke Wisniewski, Teacher: Sam Ecoff
- Honorable mentions: *Halloween Bells* by EJ Cook, Teacher: Sam Ecoff, *The Mechanic* by Savanna Lemke, Teacher: Sam Ecoff
- Winners and runners up will receive checks, and all participants have been awarded points on Ovations.

Congratulations to all of the students who submitted excellent scores to this year's competition, and to all of the teachers who supported their students in creating so many wonderful compositions this year. Your efforts are to be applauded!

I'll look forward to hearing more great compositions from you next year, but don't wait to get your students started on their next composition. Next month, I will present some additional great composition contest opportunities for students who compose. Until then, keep making great music!

Sam Ecoff
Chair, WMTA Young Composers Competition

IMTF Article

In Praise of Our Piano Technicians By Mickey Lytle, NCTM



I met my piano technician, Brian Mott, in 1998 when I moved to Madison and started working at the local Steinway dealer. In my mid-twenties, I relished our conversations where I especially enjoyed his easy way of communicating. I would always learn a new vocabulary word (he was my “dictionary.com word of the day” before dictionary.com was even a thing!) and be taught about something I never knew I needed to know about pianos. He was invaluable to me as an educator, a piano salesperson, and a musician. Over the years, I have trusted Brian’s insights, recommendations, and expertise. He tuned not only my personal studio pianos, but also those of the community music school I founded, several of my students’ and colleagues’ pianos, local churches, the Overture Center, and more. He was vitally essential when my C3 encountered some major issues as he went above and beyond in assisting with making sure the warranty work was covered as it was shipped to Chicago for major repairs. He has appraised countless pianos for my students’ families. He aided in choosing my B, tirelessly helped with its wood repair, treated it as his own in its early days to ensure it had a nice even “bloom” in regard to touch, voicing, and regulation. If I knew someone who needed a piano dolly, was in the market for a certain type of instrument, or had a specific question, Brian was my go-to, always highly professional, engaging, and friendly. He has never been unavailable when I asked for his assistance or recommendation. He even referred me to a young attorney back in 1998. He was tuning her piano and she asked for a teacher recommendation for lessons for herself as an adult beginner. Today, she is my best friend and I still teach her talented daughter. I’m sure he didn’t realize what a great connection he was establishing...or did he?!

Continues on Next Page

IMTF Article

Continued from Previous Page

Brian is very recently retired (or *semi-retired*, because, like piano teachers, it's really difficult to give it up altogether, isn't it?) and undergoing treatments for cancer that has returned. I am so grateful for our 20+ year relationship, centered around music and the piano. I'm not sure that many teachers are fortunate enough to enjoy such a wonderful bond with their technician, and I am truly honored to know such a wonderful person.

As a tribute to Brian and other technicians who do such wonderfully skilled labor for us, I took the opportunity to ask him some questions about his life's work. I hope you enjoy.



Brian Mott earned a Bachelor of Science in Journalism from Northwestern University in 1971. He was a company member, then Music Director (1971-72) for the Illinois Arts Council "Free Street Theater" program. This company of musicians/actors performed all around Chicago and the state of Illinois. He was also the Music Director for their European Tour 1972, traveling to Yugoslavia Arts Festival, Paris, etc. He began tuning and repairing pianos in 1971, self-taught, eventually apprenticing with experienced technicians in Los Angeles and Chicago. He became a Registered Piano Technician (RPT) member of the Piano Technician Guild (PTG) in 1983; former Director of Technical Services for Steinway in Chicago; 15 years Head Technician for the Department of Music, University of Chicago. He moved to Madison in 1992, and has enjoyed a 27-year relationship as concert technician for Madison Symphony Orchestra, as well as Steinway and other dealer support.

What is the difference between a Tuner and a Technician?

A piano tuner simply performs a tuning procedure on the piano. Technicians perform necessary repairs and more complete reconditioning or "rebuilding" procedures on the instruments. Technicians usually, but not always, are also capable tuners.

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IMTF Article

Continued from Previous Page

If someone were interested in learning the skills to become a tuner or technician, where would they start?

There are a few ongoing trade schools which teach piano technology and tuning--usually as either one- or two-year programs. The Piano Technicians Guild, Inc. (PTG) is a national trade association which offers standardized testing for technicians. This is the three-part test (written, technical/repairs and tuning) which, upon successful completion, earn one the credential as a *Registered Piano Technician* (RPT). The PTG also offers extensive continuing education opportunities for all members. A large part of my education in the field has come through the classes offered at the PTG convention/institute which convenes annually in varying cities around the country.

What are some longstanding or often heard “piano myths” that you would like to address?

The most common myth-type question we hear is “Do you have perfect pitch?” That is the somewhat undefined and rather mysterious ability to identify the note names of tones heard. Not a requirement to learn piano tuning, although some people are born with, or learn at an early age, this ability; it can certainly be helpful to learning the procedure. Normal hearing, and a willingness to learn to listen very carefully, are really all that are required to begin the process, although this is controversial. I have taught several other people the basic skill of “aural” tuning in a few weeks through the years, and some have made it their careers also. It takes a long time and dedicated effort to develop the technique to do the work properly.

Talk about the differences between tuning, voicing, and regulation.

Tuning, strictly speaking, is the process of tightening or loosening the 230 or so strings in a typical piano. When the strings have all been adjusted to the aural “road map” we know as 12-tone equal temperament, we recognize the sound as a piano correctly tuned. (You'll also hear opinions as to whether the 12-tone equal temperament is the best way to arrange the notes, though!)

Voicing refers to the skill of adjusting the timbre, or tone color, of the sound the piano generates. In practical terms, this usually refers to adjusting the character of the piano hammer felt to make the sound fuller, brighter, more even, note-to-note, etc.

Regulation refers to adjusting the key mechanism (action), which consists of quite a few wooden levers which interact, for each key played. These wooden parts are covered with felt or leather to reduce noise, and it is primarily the compaction of these soft materials which requires periodic adjustment so that the instrument is responsive to the pianist's dynamic touch in a satisfying, controllable manner.

Continues On Next Page

IMTF Article

Continued from Previous Page

What should be a piano owner's top priorities to keep their instrument maintained inside and out?

In my experience, the pianos which are seen on a regular basis tend to fare the best over time. Of course, the requirements of a home piano with only casual use, or beginning students, is different than the maintenance requirements of concert instruments, which require more intense scrutiny.

Pianos in the Midwest will drift out of tune with the seasonal fluctuations in humidity, so, for most residential users, twice-each-year tuning service is typical advice. Other services, including voicing, regulation and cleaning may or may not be indicated, but regular visits with a Registered Piano Technician are the best assurance that the instruments will be properly maintained according to the setting.

What do you wish people would ask/tell you when you first work on their piano?

Are all the notes working correctly? Any problems with touch-response, or unusual extraneous sounds? It's very helpful to have a list, hopefully fairly short, of specific complaints, which can be addressed at the time of tuning service.

How can independent teachers make a technician's job easier or more fulfilling?

We are closely allied with conscientious teachers, who usually have pianos in their studios which are well maintained. While the expense of piano service is certainly a business overhead concern for independent teachers, I find the most successful teachers don't resist a planned service schedule, which will keep their pianos in generally good shape for critical lesson needs of advanced students.

In your experience, how can teachers and technicians better work as a team to enhance and support each others' businesses?

I think it's good for teachers to learn first-hand about voicing, which is the aspect of piano service I find most neglected in the field. I find most teachers have some awareness or experience evaluating their students' practice instruments, and can advise the owners and the technicians, if they are aware of problems which need to be corrected, so their students can progress without the instrument causing needless frustration.

Piano technicians need to become aware of as many competent teachers in their service area as possible, so they can better direct new clients to the ideal teachers for any prospective students. Teachers are often known for which type of students they prefer to engage, and this general knowledge is important for all technicians.

Continues On Next Page

IMTF Article

Continued from Previous Page

What is the most memorable experience you've had in your career as a technician?

Over the past 40-plus years, I've been fortunate to service for many well-known artists of all types, from classical to jazz to pop. One of the funnier moments I can recall was when servicing for the late Victor Borge in Chicago. The sponsor of his concert, a sophisticated, society-type, had been quite anxiously awaiting her opportunity to introduce herself to him off-stage at the Auditorium Theater. When the moment came, she eagerly rushed forward with hand extended,

"Mr. Borge," she exclaimed, "How do you do!?"

Mr. Borge froze immediately and responded with dead-serious concern, "How do I do...WHAT?"

Everyone cracked up. He was always so much fun to work with.

As you enter retirement, what will you miss the most? The least?

I'm fortunate, in that I am able to continue to work as I wish, albeit on a reduced schedule. I'm enjoying becoming more active as a musician again. I will miss the regular visits with so many clients who became great conversational friends over the years. I get emotional when I think of letting those relationships go, but I have tried my best to make sure they have been referred to qualified Registered Piano Technicians. Hopefully, I'll be around for quite some time for consultation should the need arise.

Mickey Lytle, NCTM, serves WMTA as the Independent Music Teachers Forum (IMTF) chair. She is the founding president and member of Madison Area Music Educators (MAME), serving currently as immediate past president, website/publicity/social media chair. She is a member, adjudicator, and local chair of the National Guild of Piano Teachers (NGPT). Her students have received numerous musical honors including the Guild Paderewski Medal, Guild Sonatina Medal, Guild National and International Winners, MTNA Junior Auditions State Winners and Convention Recitalist, and college scholarship recipients. Ms. Lytle is active in her local community theater and serves on the Board of Directors for the Center for College and Career Readiness and EdCenter, Inc. She is the founder of the annual Sonatina Festival held in the Madison area each fall, and founded a local nonprofit community music school. She presents and consults on a variety of topics including nonprofit management, piano pedagogy, arts-related business strategies, and marketing.

CVMTA

Chippewa Valley Music Teachers Association

President: Esther Pedigo (esther.pedigo@gmail.com)

Website: cvmusicteachers.org

The Chippewa Valley Music Teachers Association is a growing and active group of 33 members from the Eau Claire region. The instruments represented are Vocal, Piano/Organ, String, and Woodwind, as well as, Specialists in Theory and Early Childhood. With this diversity, we continue to have an emphasis on providing programs and events that speak to needs of all our members and provide educational and performance opportunities beyond what might be perceived as “piano specific”.

This year there is a renewed emphasis on Mentoring. The goal is 3-fold: to reach out to the new teacher, the new member and assist members with the practical challenges of District Auditions and Federation Festival. Even more, the goal is to foster relationships, because it is there where members feel like they belong and have a reason to stay.

To that end, CVMTA provides programs, and performance events for its members, which give opportunity for professional growth, networking, and comradery. **All members of WMTA are welcome to our programs at no cost.**

Programs are scheduled every other month, September through March, on Saturdays, 12:30 – 3 PM at Lighthouse Baptist Church, UW-EC Haas Fine Arts Center, or Online. Each program provides networking time called Connections, followed by an educational presentation. We are excited to offer the following programs for 2020 – 2021:

September 12	“Creating a Successful Studio” – Gail Heywood
November 14	“What Do You Mean They Changed It!?! Preparing for the New WMTA & NFMC Theory Tests” Wilkinson Studio & Sydney Alexander
January 16	“Performance Management Anxiety: The Teacher’s Role” Dr Vanessa Cornett-Murtada
March 13	“Teaching the Classical Style” – Dr. Deborah Masloski

Our performance offerings for 2020-2021 are as follows:

October 17, 4:00 PM	Student Collaborative Recital
November 7, 11:00 AM	Fall Gala
February, TBD	Master Class
February, TBD	CVMTA Teacher Recital

CVMTA is also Senior Club for Wisconsin Federation of Music Clubs. Our members have an opportunity to be members of the Senior Club. Therefore, they can participate in WFMC performance opportunities and other events, including the Federation Festival in March.





FVMTA Young Artist Festival

Calling NE Wisconsin music students and teachers! Join Fox Valley Music Teachers Association in celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the annual FVMTA **Young Artist Festival** slated for **Saturday, February 13, 2021** at Lawrence Conservatory of Music, Appleton, WI!

The Festival is an **educational day** composed of **music competitions** (piano, strings, voice, woodwinds/brass, ensembles), a **clinic** for students in grades 6-12, **performances** of winners and the awarding of over \$1,000 in cash prizes at the culminating **Winners Recital!**

Click [FVMTA Young Artist Festival](#) or go to fvmta.org for details and registration.

20th Annual Sonatina Festival Saturday, November 14, 2020 A Virtual Festival in 2020 www.sonatafestival.org



The 20th Annual Sonatina Festival aims to raise awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the Sonata and Sonatina musical forms. As many music auditions and competitions are held in the spring, this festival encourages musical preparation during the fall semester by providing a performance goal for pianists of all ages and levels. We hope you'll participate online (the usual in-person event is modified this year for everyone's health and safety) for this exciting music-making event! Please visit our website for more information.

FVMTA

Honoring Jan Kaminski and Marillyn Freeman Fox Valley Music Teachers Association is saddened to report the loss of two long-time WMTA members and fine musicians, Jan Kaminski and Marillyn Freeman, who passed away on the same day this spring (March 24, 2020). Both Jan and Marillyn were originally members of the Fox Valley Keyboard Teachers (FVKT) in the 1970's, and were active and respected members of FVMTA for four decades. Marillyn Freeman, of Neenah, was one of the four charter members of FVKT in 1976, and a founding member of FVMTA. A gifted pianist and organist, she played for local church services starting at age 12, and enjoyed a 54-year career as organist and music director for St. Paul Lutheran Church in Neenah. Marillyn was active in the Northeast Wisconsin chapter of the American Guild of Organists, serving as Treasurer and performing annually on the Lunchtime Organ Recital series. She also served as an officer in the early days of FVMTA in the 1990's, organizing recitals, judging piano competitions, teaching and mentoring generations of young pianists and organists in the Fox Valley. She was an invested participant in the first twelve FVMTA Monster Concerts, filling many leadership roles over the years, and was named as FVMTA Member of the Year in 2017. Jan Kaminski, of Kaukauna, taught piano for over 50 years, and was actively involved with professional music organizations from the start. Jan was a tireless organizer in selecting music, handling registration and wrangling/logistics for hundreds of performers backstage during many Monster Concert piano duo performances. She also coordinated registrations and collated results for WMTA District Auditions — In manually assigning audition times for 350+ students for many years, Jan was the original "Ovation". Jan and Marillyn were mentors and friends to all in FVMTA; their organizational skills and willingness to serve made them invaluable members. They were dear colleagues who will be sorely missed and lovingly remembered.



Marillyn Freeman



Jan Kaminski

Leadership Position Opportunity

Are you possibly interested in being more involved in WMTA? Do you want to assist in the mission of the organization? Do you want to build your network of colleagues? Have you thought about a Leadership position on the WMTA board? Do you wonder how people get to be the leaders? Then take a look at the following open positions for leadership:

JOB DESCRIPTION – LOCAL ASSOCIATION CHAIR

The position of Local Association Chair is one primarily of connection and facilitation. Responsibilities include:

1. Acts as conduit between MTNA Chair and all local association presidents throughout the state
2. Keeps LA presidents apprised of all national correspondence
3. Establishes a working relationship and close communication with local association presidents
4. Offers assistance as needed by local associations
5. Mentors local association presidents as needed
6. Remains responsive to requests for assistance, and researches/brainstorms positive approaches to concerns
7. Maintains positive avenues of communication
8. Attends state conferences and national conferences when possible
9. Prepares information packet for each local association president, to be disbursed at conference luncheon meeting
10. Attends state board meetings, dispensing info to presidents
11. Sends out End of Year Information report to presidents, and gathers information from all associations. This is inclusive of but not limited to a full overview of the past year activities, number of members, program offerings, student activities, teacher enrichment activities, etc. This information is sent on to MTNA national chair and provides a picture of state associations.
12. Prepares list of new Presidents and Officers and sends to WMTA President, WMTA Administrative Secretary, and MTNA national chair.
13. Encourages the affiliation of new local associations and/or collegiate chapters within the state and acts as facilitator through set-up of association
14. Periodically checks membership data to ensure connection has been made between association president and new member
15. Gathers info regarding association programs and send to LA presidents
16. Gathers Member of the Year information (bio) from associations, and prepares certificates for presentation at conference
17. Sends Member of the Year bios to Administrative Secretary for inclusion in conference booklet
18. Reminds LA presidents of deadlines for articles to be included in newsletter
19. Reminds LA presidents of availability of grants and deadlines

While it may appear that there are many bullets in this job description, this is not a labor-intensive position. It is busiest in May when End of the Year reports are coming and being compiled, and in October in preparation for state conference.

It is, however, a very rewarding position, and affords the opportunity to see the true richness of our Wisconsin associations, and to meet the presidents that are making it happen.





MUSIC MAJOR at MBU

*Focused mission
with flexible options*

Highlights

CHOOSE TWO CONCENTRATIONS:

Pedagogy
Performance
Arranging
Church Music

- Three Years of Hands-on, Supervised Teaching Experience at Music Prep (mbu.edu/prep)
- Active MTNA Collegiate Chapter
- 2019 Music Seniors Scored in Top 2% Nationwide on Major Field Test

Prepare for the diversity demanded of today's music professionals!



Membership Reminders

Have You Moved?

All membership changes, including renewals and address changes, should be made on the MTNA website by updating your member profile. www.MTNA.org

PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT LINE

MTNA provides free counsel for members. Contact the MTNA National Headquarters with any business or pedagogical questions.

(888) 512-5278 -or- professionalsupport@mtna.org

They will gladly assist you in areas such as business plans, contracts, copyright concerns, legal standards, property acquisition, zoning laws, partnerships, grants, acoustic building standards, ASCAP matters, certification, teacher development, group affiliations, music supplies, equipment purchasing, lesson plans, customer fees, health insurance and teacher networking.

Advertise Here

The WMTA Newsletter is published four times a year during the months of February, May, August and December. The deadline for sending submissions is the 1st of the month before the issue publishes. Please contact our central office to learn more about the requirements and opportunities for advertising in this and other WMTA publications.

Full Page Ad (8.5" x 11") \$100

Half Page Ad (8.5 x 5.5") \$50

Quarter Page Ad (4.25" x 5.5") \$25

Eighth Page Ad (4.25" x 2.75") \$15

Member Submissions

All WMTA members may submit relevant announcements or articles to be published in the newsletter. All submissions should be submitted 2 to 4 weeks in advance and must be received by the 15th day of the month prior to issue date or they will not be included and are subject to space availability.

To propose information, please email the central office with potential text and pictures. All text should be concise and edited for content, spelling and grammar. Photos should be clear, high resolution and ready for publication. Please do not send pdf documents. All content is subject to edit and approval before it can be included.



Be sure to find
and "like"
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Teachers Association
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